



Plant Chat

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to the NRCS Field Offices in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota

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Fruit Species For Home Use High Priority at PMC

Many landowners give high priority to fruit species for home use when planning a new tree planting. The PMC has several species that are in advanced evaluation and scheduled for release, or already available but are under-used in the area.



Hybrid plum fruit

- A hybrid plum (ND-1134) was developed by Wilfred Herman from Miller, South Dakota, and is our next plant scheduled for release. It has a high percentage of exceptionally large, sweet fruit. It is a popular selection available from Big Sioux Nursery.

• Black chokeberry (323957) is an easy picking, heavy fruit producing, native shrub species. It makes outstanding juice and wine. I have received several calls from wineries who have discovered this species and are looking for local sources. An additional benefit is a brilliant red fall leaf color. The PMC selection is available from Lincoln-Oakes Nurseries and Big Sioux Nurseries. Minnesota conservation nurseries have this species, but not the PMC selection.



Black chokeberry fruit

- Chokecherry is probably the most popular fruit species addition in tree plantings. Disease problems such as black knot and western-x limit its success. The PMC has a new selection we have been calling the Sheridan Source (Sheridan County, ND). It was selected for disease resistance, fast growth, and heavy fruit production. Seedlings are currently available from Lincoln-Oakes Nurseries.
- Seaberry is an underused fruit species that has performed well in test plantings. The attractive leaves are light green above and silvery-white underneath. This hardy shrub makes excellent wildlife habitat, and in Asia and Europe is prized for both its ornamental value and edible

berries. The fruit is a unique orange color and is particularly high in vitamin C. Although the fruit, with its tart astringency, may not be ideal for fresh picking and eating, it is delicious in juices and jams. The branches have thorns and the plant does sucker. Seaberry is available in limited quantities from most of the conservation nurseries in the area.

Dwight Tober, Plant Materials Specialist



Seaberry fruit

Collecting Indiangrass

Spring is here and it is time to start thinking about digging that Indiangrass plant you selected for the PMC last fall. The earlier the better. Hopefully by mid-April the frost will be out of the ground. A sod chunk 6 inches square should give us enough material to pull a dozen plants for transplanting. We have better survival when pulling newer root material from the outside of the plant. If it is an older, larger plant, carefully cut off an outside portion with a sharp tiling spade. The chunk should be moist, but not wet. Put it in a plastic bag (a 2-gallon zippered bag works well). Remember to poke holes in the plastic bag so there is some air exchange. Completely sealed bags will start molding in a matter of hours. Put the bag in a box and send to: **USDA-NRCS, Bismarck PMC, 3308 University Drive, Bismarck, ND 58504-7564**. Please send an e-mail to Nancy at the PMC when you send your sample so we can be expecting it (Nancy.Jensen@nd.usda.gov). Also it is very important to include the following information with the sample: **Collector's Name; Date; Office; State; County where collected; Legal Description or GPS Location; Site Information/Land Use; Associated Species, Soil Texture; and Remarks**. We will assign your plant a number and return that information to you. If you have any questions, give me or the PMC staff a call. Thanks!

Dwight Tober, Plant Materials Specialist



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